

News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



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DES funds effort to update the *1989 Lower Merrimack River Corridor Management Plan*

Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services announced today that an update to the Lower Merrimack River Corridor Management Plan has been completed by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission with financial and staff support from DES. The purpose of the updated Merrimack River Corridor Management Plan is to provide guidance to the communities adjacent to the Lower Merrimack River – Merrimack, Litchfield, Hudson and Nashua – when making decisions that could affect the river and its watershed. The Plan provides a comprehensive and consistency approach across municipal boundaries and throughout the watershed. The Plan also provides a regional focus for managing man-made and natural environments in an area where growth is occurring.

The Lower Merrimack River Corridor Management Plan was originally adopted in September 1989 pursuant to RSA 483:10 of the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program (RMPP). The Lower Merrimack River was one of the first five rivers designated into the RMPP. The Rivers Management and Protection Program complements and reinforces existing state and federal water quality laws and establishes instream flows for designated rivers to enhance the outstanding characteristics for which the river was nominated into the program.

“The strength of the Rivers Program is its reliance on the active involvement of local citizens and the participation of riverfront communities. These cooperative partnerships help to ensure the overall success of our river management plans,” said Tom Burack, DES Commissioner.

The Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee (LMRLAC) was formed in 1990 to advise the DES Commissioner on matters pertaining to the management of the river, consider and comment on any federal, state or local plans that would alter the resource values and characteristics for which the river was designated and develop and adopt a local river corridor management plan under RSA 483:10. . The LMRLAC has adopted a single guiding principal that serves as its driving force: “Preserve the character and integrity of the Merrimack River and its corridor by protecting its natural, historic and scenic resources and to ensure its continued utilization as a multiple use river.”

Bob Robbins, Chair of the LMRLC is pleased with the management plan. “Our chief responsibility now is to educate, inform, and assist the four corridor communities to formally adopt the Lower Merrimack River Corridor Management Plan as part of their Master Plan. Once we accomplish that, we’ll manage, monitor, and implement Plan in all four communities!”

Local citizens are nominated by their local municipal officials and appointed by the DES Commissioner to serve on a local river management advisory committee. A copy of the Lower Merrimack River Corridor Management Plan can be found online at http://www.des.nh.gov/Rivers/Plans/merrimack/lmrc_mp_chapters1-5.pdf.

For more information about the Rivers Management and Protection Program please contact Steve Couture, Rivers Coordinator at (603) 271-8801 or steven.couture@des.nh.gov or visit the RMPP home page at <http://www.des.nh.gov/Rivers/index.html>.

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